

REMARKS

The Office Action dated March 31, 2004 has been received and its contents carefully studied. Reconsideration of the rejections of the claims is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-14 and 16-24 are pending. The independent claims are claims 1, 7, 9, 16, 23, and 24.. All claims are now allowed, except for claims 7, 8, and 24.

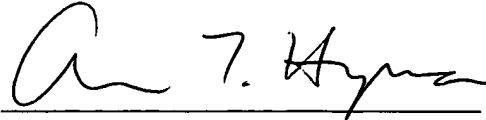
The claims are now amended merely to replace "and/or" with "or," which is a more proper way of saying the same thing. A typographical error in claims 9 and 25 is also corrected (the period was missing at the end of each sentence). Additionally, claims 7 and 24 are now converted to dependent form, in order to render all claims allowable.

Applicant wishes to clarify that none of the present amendments are to be construed as admissions, and instead are simply for purposes of expediting the examination. Likewise, any decision by applicant to not traverse any statement of the examiner during this examination should not be construed as an admission of prior art.

CONCLUSION

For all of these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims are now in condition for allowance. The references cited do not suggest what is set out in the applicant's amended claims, and do not provide the basis for developing the invention to persons having ordinary skill in the art to which the subject matter pertains. Therefore, withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested, and early allowance is most earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. T. Hyman", written over a horizontal line.

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